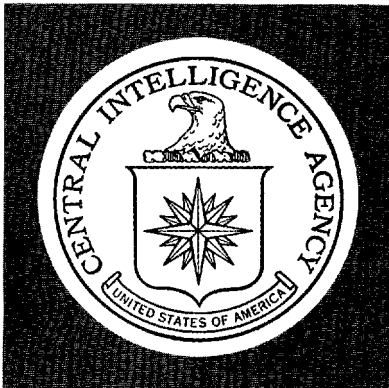


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Western Europe: Major disagreements are impeding efforts to design and build a new combat aircraft.
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Western Europe: Members of a West European consortium have been unable to agree thus far on what kind of a new multirole combat aircraft they should build.

Although the consortium members--the UK, West Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands--have agreed that the aircraft should be a variable-geometry (swing-wing) design, other requirements are being debated. German interest centers on a short-take-off-and-landing aircraft; the British emphasize greater range. The British also want a two-seater while other consortium members favor a single-seat plane.

Once basic requirements have been decided upon, assignment of design responsibilities probably will cause further trouble. The Germans, who will be placing the largest order for the aircraft, believe that the airframe design should be theirs, since development of the engine probably will fall to the British. The British, however, have indicated that they do not intend to yield the airframe design completely to the Germans. Such problems probably will delay deployment of the new aircraft until after 1975, the present target date, and could jeopardize the entire project.

The project is intended to reduce European reliance on the US, and the Europeans view it as an important step in the development of their aerospace industries. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] there might be a market for as many as 1,000 of the new planes, which would be used primarily to replace the US-designed F-104s and the Italian-designed G-91s now in service in Western Europe. [REDACTED]

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